

'Najib's fear of losing power causing despair for M'sia future'

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Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak's fear of losing power has posed a 'far more dangerous situation' than previous administrations. This has caused people to despair for the future.

This was according to National Human Rights Society (Hakam) president Ambiga Sreenevasan today at a book launch for 'Malaysia Post-Mahathir: A Decade of Change?', a compilation of articles written by eight scholars.

"People are more depressed than 10 years ago. Everywhere I go, I get people coming to me and asking what's going on with this country.

"The reason is, that fear of losing power which is present today, has contributed to the toxicity of the present situation and has made it far more dangerous than in previous years.

"I say dangerous in the sense of the future, whether it can be assured under the present administration," she said.

From the economic aspect, she asserted that the gap between the poor and rich is getting wider.

"The government's solution to this problem has made the people more dependent on it by giving handouts like 1Malaysia people's aid (BR1M) instead of empowering the people," she said.

According to her, Najib, who had earlier released a few detainees of the Internal Security Act (ISA), has now resorted to the old oppressive ways as a convenient tool against his political opponents.

She said Najib and his predecessor Abdullah Ahmad Badawi started out well but eventually turned to oppression.

She made the speech to compare the nation under Mahathir and post-Mahathir.

'Not enough good people'

"Make no mistake about this: Umno-BN which had been in power for 50 years aims to stay on forever. This means that our dream of a truly multi-party democracy will not come true for awhile," she said.

"There are not enough good people in the country today. Good people place the country before themselves. Good people must have integrity and honesty, they must have political will to fight corruption, racism and extremism...," she said.

The embattled prime minister, who is embroiled in the 1MDB and RM2.6 billion donation scandals had repeatedly stressed that he would not step down.

"We are now facing a fortress of power, a system that was put in place by former prime minister Dr Mahathir Mohamad, which is not easy to (destroy)," said Ambiga, who is also ex-Bersih co-chairperson.

"I don't just hold Najib responsible for our woes today. I hold the entire cabinet responsible for the woes. They are supposed to run this country honestly and efficiently," she said.

She also said she envies the qualities of the leaders from neighbouring countries.

"We should be doing so much better. When I looked at the leaders around us, I feel envious because they are progressing much more than we seem to be. We seem to be in a huge mess, and in fact we are in a mess," she said.

She, however, did not name the foreign leaders that she felt were better than Najib.